

# The Commons

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Settlement Point of View.

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## What Then?

BY HERBERT NEWTON CASSON.

When the mind is mapped as streets are—row  
on row;

When the heart is tamed from Love's unreason-  
ing throe;

When the poet's winged fancy

Is an outgrown necromancy;

When the rain of inspiration turns to snow:

What then?

When all doubts and fears are backward cast;

When the dream of world-wide Brotherhood is  
past;

When the prophet's radiant vision

Is too futile for derision;

When the soul is but a formula at last

What then?

When the fierce machine has conquered flesh and  
blood;

When the labor-power is belt and wheel and rod;

When the unfit nations wonder

At the gold we stagger under;

When the world is but an economic clod:

What then?

—In *The Outlook*.

## The Isolation of our Public Charities.

BY JULIA C. LATHROP.

FOR EIGHT YEARS A MEMBER OF THE ILLINOIS  
STATE BOARD OF CHARITIES.

Some years ago it chanced to be my duty to visit the poor-house of a remote but prosperous country. The house was on the high-road within a mile of the county seat, yet the Zulus were as near neighbors as were the intelligent population of the pretty town. It was a typical expression of public inattention. In the first place the care of the poor was let out to the lowest cash bidder, an unflinching sign of poor care. The buildings were miserable, hardly protecting from the elements, the filth and vermin beyond decent description. The food was such that there was a case or two of scurvy, the inmates were badly clothed and a general air of lawlessness and neglect pervaded the place. Among those present was a decent widow and her little children, who

had been recently left with a bit of land but no money. When they all fell sick, a county supervisor had summarily brought them to this reeking place as the economical way to take care of the family. Here was a feeble-minded child untaught, here the keeper's own children no better taught or cared for, here a respectable old woman on a tiny island of cleanliness from which she labored hard to sweep back the swelling tide of surrounding dirt;—freely mingling with the other inmates were dissolute wrecks of humanity who could only contaminate those about them. Members of the local committee of the State Board were with me and were much shocked at what we saw in this "surprise visit" when everyday conditions were revealed. One of the party, a lady, active in good work, said, "Well, I have been here before, our Society comes at Christmas and we give out cards; but we have always sent word we were coming and it was scrubbed up and the children all looked real nice. I never thought it could be like this."

It would be most untruthful to offer this as a fair specimen of all country charity, yet it is typical of too numerous a class of country institutions large and small, throughout Illinois and throughout the country.

### THE PERSONNEL OF THE POOR HOUSE.

The poor house receives a multitude of beings who are made helpless by their own or somebody's sins; and unfortunately they constitute the least interesting and the most hopeless of social groups in the usual view. It is impossible to restore the lives of these ruined individuals, their fate is sealed,—this is felt so universally that the public turns away after providing shelter out of common funds, sickened, pitying at first, but soon forgetful. Perhaps this is not entirely deplorable; sometimes we have in private charity a complacent belief that by furnishing artificial backbones to feeble invertebrates we enable them to evade that law of evolution which forbids an invertebrate to get on in the race with his betters even if furnished a skillfully constructed back-bone by some philanthropist. There is a grim wisdom in the public recognition of the finality of the poor-house.

### SEPARATENESS OF STATE CHARITABLE INSTITUTIONS.

If the country poorhouses are isolated, state charitable institutions suffer from separateness

yet more. We do not find in the State institutions the ill-assorted fragments of human waste which fill the poorhouses,—we find for the most part people either sick with the sadly disabling disease which we have named insanity, or suffering from some deficiency of sense. In either case they need the best medical care,—in varying degrees it is true, but always the best. They need not only physicians and internes within the institution, but they need the highest medical and scientific authorities from outside to come in and rescue the institution from routine, to direct investigation and to maintain a scientific spirit, as a fine visiting staff serves to do in a general hospital. A young physician just home from graduate study in a foreign university, a vigorous, eager, well-balanced person of unusual cultivation and sympathy, a man who knew locomotor ataxia from clinics and from Matthew Arnold's Heine as well, just the type of personality needed in a public institution,—had obtained with some difficulty a position on the staff of an institution offering specially interesting possibilities of research. His naive disappointment that his duties in making the rounds on the wards left him no time nor strength for research was in itself a significant criticism.

It is unhappily true that as at present administered, state institutions for the insane with few exceptions offer little to patients except safe-keeping, and this has become so exaggerated that the lock and key rather than the physician's healing balm are the true emblem for the hospital for the insane.

#### PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS IN FOREIGN LANDS.

In foreign hospitals for the insane the general average of bodily comfort or luxury is far lower than here, the buildings and equipment far simpler, and many features of the administration, especially the social gradations of inmates and of officials, would not be tolerated here, yet the necessity of a fine medical spirit and the value of research is far more emphasized. In Scotland, in Belgium, France and other countries on the continent there is a growing recognition of the fact that a large proportion of the insane can be cared for more economically, more humanely and pleasantly, in a colony or village life or by boarding in families, than is possible in great institutions. The mere discussion of allowing free life for quiet, chronic patients has scarcely begun here as yet.

Perhaps like other imperfections in our methods and manners, it is as well that this one regarding the conduct of this great branch of public activity should exist until there is a popular demand for improvement, and a popular knowl-

edge that insists on the most enlightened care for the public wards, rather than that improvement should come because a professional class reaches down to supply,—however well,—a popular need.

To say that there is little care of patients as individuals; that here is little ingenuity as to their occupations; that the whole system is administered *en bloc*; that the attendants are overworked and underpaid, that the physicians become disheartened by drudgery; that there is no adequate system of internes or of training schools for nurses; that there is too much mechanical restraint and too little hospital equipment for acute cases; these sound like technical criticism far removed from popular interest; yet it is necessary to gain that interest if they are to be changed. It is easy also to say "Oh these patients and inmates live much better than they did at home for the most part and they can't be cured, so what's the use?" This is said in effect all the time; and if the speakers are social reformers rather than children of darkness they probably add "Let us do something vital and constructive."

#### CLAIM OF PUBLIC CHARITIES UPON PEOPLE OF INTELLIGENCE.

Now here are a few considerations as to the claim of public charity upon intelligent people: First, on the score of kindliness, plain, unscientific good-will. It is surprising how many of the hardships of the poorhouse can be softened by a little neighborly attention. I know of a woman who has been an inmate of the Cook County Infirmary at Dunning, Ill., sixteen years, she is just that type of person, more or less feeble in mind and body who cannot make a living; but in common with many persons of the highest ability she is capable of becoming infinitely bored with her life. The other day a friend invited her out for a few days' vacation. She is known to have ordered fried oysters in a little restaurant where she luxuriated, and is believed to have derived the same sort of benefit from her holiday that some gain from a journey to Paris. Now if such a treat were taken seriously by the giver, if he fancied the management and spirit of the institution changed because of the individual pleasuring, this would be a **most** dangerous expression of amiability. If, however, as was the result in the case mentioned, it only makes the giver realize more fully the stupid monotony and needless hardships of the life at Dunning, and determines him to work for a better state of affairs here, it may become a highly useful and constructive act. I know of a little poor-house where conditions were as hateful as those suggested at the beginning of this paper which en-

joyed a substantial reformation through the determined efforts of one fearless, largehearted person. It is not impossible that people may be found good and wise and persistent enough to make over a great poor-house.

#### APPEAL FOR PERSONAL HUMAN SERVICE.

There is scarcely a poorhouse in the land where there are not cases which properly appeal to the sympathetic for some little personal service, which even those bent on constructive work may afford to aid as a means of gaining information, or even as an excursion into the realm of pure sentiment. I shall never forget an insane woman whose room was kept beautifully clean and whose piety was touchingly shown in various little shrines adorned with wonderfully cut papers, as well as in her belief that by her prayers she rescued from punishment many thousand souls daily.

She complained that she was kept locked in her room and when I tried to comfort her by saying that it must make her happy to set at rest so many poor souls, she said, "But I could do twice as much good if I were only out." I asked her if she would like to see the priest, and she very eagerly answered, "Yes;" so I sent a rather reproachful note to the parish priest, whom I could not find before leaving the town and later received an answer, in quaint German-English thanking me for writing, saying the woman was a "much respected lady" that he had not known of her presence in the poorhouse, but that he had been to visit her and from now on would "minister to her as well as he could." The church, of all communions, might well look more carefully to these poor lambs who are beyond the shepherding of this world's wisdom.

#### KINDERGARTEN FOR ADULT PATIENTS IN AN INSANE ASYLUM.

A few years ago a company of particularly sane women often visited the insane asylum at Dunning; seeing the dullness of the women patients who sit idle in long rows in the dark wards, yet with all the work of the place so unorganized that the dresses they wear are never ironed; the visitors raised the money for the kindergarten for some of these poor castaways. The backing of the best medical authorities was given as to the usefulness to these minds become childish, of the stimulus to which little children respond in the kindergarten. There was space available in the institution and all was ready. A teacher was procured, when the committee was suddenly met with the absolute refusal of the superintendent to allow a kindergarten. That ended the matter. He undoubtedly felt a certain timidity at any change or improvement and also that dread which

officials in a politically managed institution always feel, of the presence of the sort of discriminating 'outsiders,' who should be able to co-operate with them and to translate to the public the legitimate needs of the institution.

#### GREAT EXPENSE DEMANDS BEST MANAGEMENT.

Again, there is the consideration of immediate public policy. There should be an intelligent popular demand for a more highly organized and scientific management of the whole system of public institutions, especially those for dependents and delinquents. In Illinois as elsewhere, the cost of the public charities alone has long been the largest item in the State's budget; it is now nearly a third of the whole state tax and increases with successive legislative appropriation. In New York the State cares for more than 20,000 insane alone. In Illinois the county houses and the State institutions together shelter about 19,000 persons of whom more than half are insane. The question of their humane and economical care is one of organization, which must enlist popular interest to be accomplished. The average management everywhere is lavish in matters that show, but niggardly in the pay of attendants, in the equipment for acute cases and toward the medical staff. Yet the public can afford to pay much for treatment which will cure, or point out possibilities of cure. Above all, the public is interested in having medical students taught by clinics and through internship, something of the premonitory symptoms of mental breakdown. It is the general practitioner who after all is the only medical man with a chance to prevent insanity and the medical schools as a rule teach little or nothing of it.

#### CO-OPERATION BETWEEN STATE CHARITABLE AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS.

In this view we are led at once to consider why there is no co-operation between the State charitable institutions and the State educational institutions. The State pays great sums for the care of its dependents and of its delinquents who must be considered with them at this point. Volumes have been written on the enormity of the county jail system for instance, and doubtless many more will be written before jails cease to maintain their classic reputation as "schools of crime." Public opinion alone can demand that the conduct of the jail be separated from that of the Sheriff's office and placed in charge of persons of fitness and training.

The State also pays great sums for free higher education. Why is it that the State medical school, the State School of Economics and sociology, have no relation to the State hospitals and institutions for delinquents? Why do we

not have internes from the schools of economics and sociology in all the institutions? To go further, why does not the State train up educated persons who shall find an honored and satisfactory calling in the actual care of prisoners and dependents?

The State raises up large numbers of normal schools to fit young persons for public school teachers. No one is bold enough to suggest that these be superseded and the teaching done by political appointees. Why is it any more for the public interest that the thousands of persons engaged in the care of delinquents and dependents should be hired and dismissed, as they are over a great part of America,—because they or their friends are Democrats or are Republicans or are of any political complexion? Why do we give the teacher, the physician, the farmer, the butter-maker, the druggist a special education at public cost and make no provision to instruct those intrusted with duties equally specialized and of great public value?

#### PLEA FOR TRAINING IN INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE.

Think what opportunities for sound useful work and study, would be open if every poor-house, every jail, every state institution, charitable and penal, were conducted by persons devoted to their work and properly qualified for it. Far more, think how much easing comfort or help might be given to multitude of helpless beings.

Finally, all this work if well done has constructive value:—In the first place its function is to clear the normal stream of life of clogging and poisonous matter, plainly an essential work. Again if done intelligently, with a sense of connection, with the co-operation of other agencies, it offers certain opportunities of research and for discovering causes which are of the highest constructive importance. It comes to have a vital bearing not only on special preventive measures, but on the great question of race progress. Does it not seem as well worth doing by those whose abilities may be suited to it as any other honest task? Rightly considered, is it not as full of interest?

We shall not need much longer to argue that it is time that public institutions were removed from the irrelevant control of political organizations; but is it not time to urge a further development—possible as soon as the institutions are not "in politics" but no sooner, namely, that the work of caring for dependents and delinquents should be rescued from its isolation, and since it must long be a necessary public service that it should become a dignified and adequate service? There are of course good signs to be found even

in the dismal regions where the untranslated shades of pauperism and misery and of what we call crime are pent.

I know of no more cheering indication than the action of the trustees of the New York Reformatory for Women, when that institution was to be opened last year. Notice of the examinations under the State civil service law was sent widely throughout the United States among college women, and every effort was made to secure for all the officers from superintendent and physician to care-takers or matrons; women who expressed all the cultivation which the schools can impart. The examinations themselves were most discriminating—not academic, but ably framed to bring out the applicants adaption—or lack of it, for the work proposed.

This unusual and reasonable inquiry may well serve to emphasize the value of a still closer co-operation between the state schools and the other state institutions, such as has been suggested above, especially may it lead us to consider the reasonableness of state training schools for this service.

If genuine culture keeps the soul sensitive to impressions and preserves it from the torpor of isolation and the callous of routine, where do we need it more than in our public institutions?

### Workers with American Highlanders in Mountain Conference.

BY MRS. MARY ANDERSON HILL.

A unique series of meetings was held last June at Tusculum, Tenn. There, under the shadow of the Great Smokies, gathered the workers sent out by the North Presbyterian Church to the mountains of North Carolina, West Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee. The conference was marked by the desire of these men and women to carry back with them not only fresh inspiration for evangelical work, their first duty, but also wider knowledge of practical methods. The latter they sought especially through the Social Settlement.

At the suggestion of Miss Mary E. McDowell, who had visited some parts of this country and recognized its needs, half the time of the conference was given to discussion of the Social Settlement and the applicability of its idea and plans to mountain work. The church hopes to establish in each district a home for its teacher and Bible reader. Wherever these homes have been built, they serve already as social centres and the women who live in them are veritable "settlers." They told how their neighbors would stop to din-

ner on the way to the "store" and would carry away marvelous new notions of household thrift and cleanliness.

Prayer-meetings held in the little parlors were followed by social games that truly enriched the lives of women who had never been "yan" side of the mountains and who had spent their days in the drudgery of field and living-room. Best of all perhaps, the young men and women were won to pass their evenings, or at least some of them, in a sweet, pure atmosphere.

In so brief a space it is not possible to give an idea of the atmosphere of these meetings. Held, many of them, in the open air under great forest trees, they seemed full of the devotion and brotherhood of early Christianity. Whatever may have been contributed by those in charge of the Social Settlement division, they had a sense of personal gain; gain through a new realization of the natural and inevitable growth of the social idea and of the oneness of this idea with Christian brotherhood.

### Mr. Reynolds on the Victory over Tammany.

In writing of the election of Seth Low as Mayor of New York City and William T. Jerome as district attorney, Mr. James B. Reynolds, head-worker of the University Settlement Society of New York, says, in *The Independent*, "Another qualification which I believe to be essential in a mayor and which Mr. Low possesses to an eminent degree is a knowledge of social conditions. As president of the University Settlement Society, Mr. Low has constantly encouraged its important work of social investigation and has co-operated in the application of the results of its investigations for the welfare of those concerned. He deeply realizes the existing inequality of social classes, the harm done by hasty and ill advised measures of reform, and has always been ready to aid such remedial efforts as would permanently improve the conditions of the dependent classes and would more successfully open the door of opportunity to those who are limited by their poverty."

In *The Congregationalist* he characterizes Mr. William T. Jerome as the representative of good citizenship in opposition to Tammany's wholesale encouragement of crime and vice. Of this graduate of Amherst College, while Judge of the Court of Special Sessions, he gives this interesting incident "Finding last spring that warrants of arrest issued by him against gambling dens and other evil resorts 'tipped off,' that is, the parties to be arrested were warned of their dan-

ger, he promptly and courageously took the service of the warrants into his own hands and personally served them, thereby catching the criminals 'red-handed' and proving the collusion of the police officials with the law breakers." "One of his campaign headquarters was established over a saloon on Canal Street and another near the Bowery in the tenement house district. His campaign was vigorously and ably conducted by a body of men who admired his courage and aggressiveness. I asked one young man whom I found working night and day for him and who is not usually interested in a reform campaign why he was with Jerome, he replied, 'I like a fighter and one who has no shams.' The Tammany criminals struggled to defeat Jerome even more energetically than to defeat any one else on the ticket. In the last week in the campaign they openly offered votes for Low in exchange for votes for their candidate for district attorney, who was a man after their own hearts."

"The Ten Commandments are once more in good and regular standing in New York city, and it will be possible to refer to the commandment, 'Thou shalt not steal', in the presence of our newly elected city officials without being thought impolitely personal."

### The Boston Conference about Boys.

By a BOSTON OBSERVER.

There were several remarkable things about the Fifth Conference of The Men of Tomorrow, the General Alliance of Workers with Boys, which was held in Boston, October 29 and 30. One of these was commented upon the next week by the *Congregationalist*: "It gives one a thrill of pleasure when one comes in touch with a body of workers trying to deal with the boy before he has erred or fallen, trying to save him from any need later of the remedial agencies." It was surely remarkable, though it ought not to be, that men and women should find a section of humanity, not rendered picturesque by misery or desperate by sin, interesting enough to travel from Baltimore and Chicago and intervening places to Boston, to study it and try to keep it pure and strong. Representatives of remedial agencies were present and were heard, but the emphasis was upon the hopefulness of boyhood and the readiness of boyhood's response to opportunity and the helping hand.

#### ITS REPRESENTATIVE PERSONNEL.

The personnel of the Conference was interesting from its variety. Here persons engaged in work bearing very different names and apparent-



ly quite distinct in purpose found how much they had in common. Protestant, Catholic and Hebrew could join hands about the boy, and men well known everywhere were glad to learn from obscure but devoted social workers. At a sectional symposium of clubs working outside churches, Mr. John W. Glenn, late president of the National Conference of Charities, the Rev. Dr. G. M. Murray of Baltimore, Miss Mary Hall of the Good Will street boys' club of Hartford and Mr. Hugh F. Fox, president of the New Jersey Board of Children's Guardians entered into the same animated discussion. The fact that this was no gathering of faddists, and the proof that the boy has called forth the most sacrificing enthusiasm was seen in the presence of Mr. Hinckley of Maine, whose Good Will Homes, founded in faith and conducted by prayer, are now a mighty institution beside the Kennebec, of Mr. Meyer Bloomfield, a child of Mulberry Bend, now the head of the Civic Service House in the Hebrew quarter of Boston, of Mr. Henry F. Burt of Chicago Commons who left the farm and Theological Seminary for boys' work, of Superintendent Hunt of Bunker Hill Club, and "Boys' Pastor," W. H. Culver of Detroit, who forsook preaching to live with boys, and of Mr. Frank S. Mason, secretary of the Alliance, who in early manhood gave up all to found the Bunker Hill Club. These facts gave a humanness to the whole Conference.

#### DISCUSSIONS CENTER ON THE BOY AND THE HOME.

The theme of the Conference, "The Boy and the Home," approached on every side by the papers, was significant, as Dr. Samuel W. Dike pointed out in his paper on "The Home as a Factor in Social Work," as the inevitable return from the secondary institutions to the primary, from organization back to the cell. It was heartening to see how even those who are in the conduct of boys' clubs with a thousand members recognized the necessity of making the home better, of relating all club work to it and of remanding much that is now done outside to its care and development.

For the convenience of the speakers the logical order of topics was not followed, but there was a convenient notation of the programs which showed how carefully a constructive and cumulative plan had been followed. Considering these addresses in their proper arrangement, a word or two may be said about those which were most fresh in thought and outlook. The conditions of the different classes of boy-life were studied as the basis for means of aid. Of these the street boy and the school boy, and the boy reached by the church, the Y. M. C. A. and the social set-

tlement were discussed. It is hoped to give an entire convention soon to the working boy. The paper prepared to be read upon the country boy was omitted from lack of time. Mr. Jacob A. Riis' lecture upon "Tony," the street boy, had been eagerly awaited and abundantly rewarded the large audience who listened to him. Behind his vivid words lurked ever his gracious personality and his own heroic labors for the slums. He portrayed Tony's lack of a chance in life, the absence of privacy, reverence and leisure in his home, his contempt for law through seeing it broken around him, his loss of all opportunity of self-expression through play. He spoke of a brightening day which was at hand and told with glee of the changes which the approaching New York City election would prophesy, an augury which the following Tuesday ratified. Principal Endicott Peabody of Groton, in an address suffused with a warm evangelical spirit, depicted the relation of the preparatory school to the home. He deplored the lack of intimacy between parents and children and of the old priestly conception of fatherhood. He declared that a reversion to savagery in the younger generation could only be stayed by a genuinely Christian home life. Mr. Burt portrayed briefly but graphically the good home, the poor home, the poverty home and the homeless home, each of which the settlement touches, and then stated that the chief ways the settlement helps the home, are by affording opportunity for play in game room and gymnasium, by utilizing the gang instinct harmlessly, by creating self respect in encouraging cleanliness and hope, by insisting upon order, by providing a place for the expression of "the true-boy-vitality," by culture and by personality.

#### THE BOY AS AN IDEALIST.

A study of the boy as an idealist by Prof. Henry M. Burr of the Y. M. C. A. Training School was most fresh and suggestive. He declared that the boy is an idealist, that his ideals are immediate in their influence upon him, that the growing boy should be fed upon ideals suited to his age and temperament. He showed that a boy's ideals follow approximately in order the development of race ideals, and that stories embracing these lines of development are their mutual vehicle to the boy. With such impetus must come practical and related activities. Professor Burr made a very sensible suggestion that it is a boy's ideal of womanhood and of his own manhood more than instructions about matters of purity which will preserve him from sexual sins.

#### CHURCH WORK FOR BOYS.

Two lively sectional conferences were held in

the afternoon session. At the meeting of those interested in church work a terse, strong, searching and kindly critique of the Endeavor movement as applied to boys was read by the Rev. Ozora S. Davis of Newton. The main thesis was that while all the Christian virtues are implicit in one expression of the Christian Endeavor pledge, so explicit are Bible reading, prayer and vocal testimony that to the boys the society seems to encourage a feminine rather than a masculine type of piety. The result has been to alienate growing boys from the movement. Recognizing heartily the broader fellowship offered of late by the United Society, Dr. Davis urged that plans for self-expression and service be added or substituted, and that pastors endeavor to retain sympathy with the movement while adapting it more closely to the natural instincts of boy-life. This position seemed to find a hearty echo from the church workers present.

#### THE SMALL GROUP VERSUS THE MASS METHOD.

At the conference of those interested in work other than that in churches a hot battle raged, as last year, between the advocates of group and mass club work. The discussion from its very warmth was encouraging to thought and if any mass club leader present had been doing a superficial work or any group club man or woman had fallen a prey to the knitting work style of helping boys, each must have had conviction of sin pressed vigorously upon him. Mr. Charles W. Birtwell of the Children's Aid Society worked as a harmonizer by impressing the group with the fact that boys may need a large assembly room before they get courage to enter the confinement and restraint of a small class room. He advised the mass club leaders to resolve that each man of them should visit every home represented in his club during the coming year.

#### EDWARD EVERETT HALE AND "LEND A HAND."

The crown of the convention came at its close. Dr. Edward Everett Hale, the patriarchal Briaireus of goodness, presided and shed the benediction of his presence and approval over all. He reminisced delightfully of the days when definite work for boys was unknown, told of his efforts to establish the Lend a Hand movement, which was perhaps the first boys' club movement in America and which has been the fruitful parent of so many others, and described the incredulity with which the city fathers of Boston had declined a munificent proposed gift for establishing in that city not many years ago an industrial institution for boys. That men should actually give money, time and lives to help our future men no longer is incredible.

#### THE RIGHT KIND OF A HOME TO MAKE THE RIGHT SORT OF A BOY.

Dr. Francis G. Peabody of Harvard spoke what was, by common consent, the greatest word of the day. His theme was "The Right Kind of a Home to Make the Right Sort of a Boy." In his quiet, perfect English and yet with Christian passion he plead for homes that should be rich in ideal and in opportunity rather than in pleasures and wealth, for homes that should understand and enfold the developing, fickle, impressible child, for homes where the thing which the obsolete word "piety" stood for should no more be obsolete.

#### EXHIBIT OF GAMES AND HAND CRAFT.

A small but instructive exhibit of the wide variety of work being done with boys was brought by those who attended. Special features were the set of games used in a mass club, a few samples of handicraft, a beautifully mounted set of pictures showing the work of the Boston Y. M. C. A., and the Bible illuminating done by the children at Winthrop Church. The most vivid exhibit was the Bunker Hill Boys' Club Building, where part of the sessions were held. To see the rough old dwelling house jammed full of street boys, with gymnasium, game rooms, baths, reading rooms and industrial classes in operation, was most encouraging as showing how much good can be done to a great many impoverished lives with a meagre equipment and little money. Thirty men and women engaged in work for street boys alone dined together in the club, a larger number than had probably ever met in one place.

#### MEMBERSHIP IN THE ALLIANCE OF WORKERS FOR BOYS.

Although the place for the next Conference has not been settled, it is hoped that a hearty invitation from New York or Chicago may give the privilege of meeting this great company of specialists to a larger audience. The full report of the Conference is in press and will be sent for fifty cents by application to Mr. Frank S. Mason, Charlestown, Boston, or to THE COMMONS.

The president of the Alliance in his annual report showed what a startlingly large demand had been made upon his time and counsel and that of his associates, who beginning as a group of students have been forced to become without salary a bureau of information upon the whole subject. It may be well to repeat the statement made at the meetings that while no fees are charged for advice or help to any worker with boys, it is desired that all who receive help should take their turn in offering help by

paying a life membership fee in the Alliance of one dollar.

The Conference regarded not only the present but the future of work with boys. In his report the president gave abundant indications of the unrest and dissatisfaction with the condition of present agencies in churches and communities, which must portend new methods and more energetic efforts. He commented upon the establishment of local centres of those interested in this one topic in the cities of New York and Boston as suggesting the possibility of economy of forces in the great centres and of furnishing smaller groups of men who will give help and thus relieve the burdened central office of the Alliance. The Alliance itself passed two resolutions unanimously and without discussion, which themselves indicate the growing importance of the movement in behalf of adolescence. They were as follows:

"That the President in behalf of the Alliance communicate to the President of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition to be held at St. Louis the recommendation that suitable provision be made for the representation of a separate department of Charities and Correction." This resolution was intended to head off any private scheme for a so-called boy's building and aid in an endeavor to have all philanthropies, including those for boys, adequately presented.

"That it is the sentiment of this association that influence be used with Boards of Education and teachers in public schools toward extending the use of public school buildings for such social efforts as boys' clubs."

The whole meeting was one of the most cheering illustrations of wise, generous minded union of care and thought in taking hold of a definite branch of service and pressing for its more general and vigorous prosecution.

### Impression from the Boy Conference.

•BY HENRY F. BURT, DIRECTOR OF BOYS' WORK, CHICAGO COMMONS.

Just as all workers with boys emphasize the personality of leaders so does the personality of men and women take hold of our lives. Jacob A. Riis, in his story of New York street life, made us feel, and when we feel we are very likely to act. His characteristic wit and the intensity of his enthusiasm gave a good spirit to the beginning of the conference, and revealed to his auditors that we were in Boston on important business.

Such men as Francis G. Peabody, Chas. W.

Birtwell, Hugh F. Fox, and Henry M. Burr, with their depth of character and sweetness of spirit, aroused a missionary fervor that permeated the whole conference. We all felt by their presence that truthness of character, gentleness of manner, and firmness of conviction, are the essentials for leadership in boy's work.

The success of the conference depended on the president and secretary. Dr. Forbush and Mr. Mason are to be congratulated on their efforts. The program excepting one paper was carried out completely, and it was carried out on time.

#### MASS OR GROUP CLUBS, WHICH?

In the "Conference of Settlement Workers, Street Boys' Clubs Superintendents, and Boys' Y. M. C. A. Secretaries," Mr. C. H. Warner, from the Neighborhood House in New York City, gave enthusiasm to the meeting. There were some lively discussions, the most interesting of which was of the relative value of the mass and group clubs.

One gratifying feature of the conference was the fact that the gathering was representative of boys' work. On the program were representatives of the National Society for the Protection of the Family, the Public Library, the Children's Aid Society, the Y. M. C. A., the Social Settlement, the Preparatory School, the Mass Club, and the Church. This is important because the boys' club cannot do the best work alone, in fact they can do little work without the co-operation of all other child saving agencies. If any of us have the idea that we are "the whole thing," the quicker we relieve our minds of that burden the better. The writer in his own work has had occasion to call on no less than five different child saving agencies for aid. This conference stood for co-operation.

#### Y. M. C. A. BOYS' WORK.

We are all glad to hear of the great stride forward the Y. M. C. A. has taken in the boys' department. Because of the Association's gymnasium equipment, it is better adapted for boys' work to-day than any other institution. Mr. Ambrose Page of the Haverhill, Mass., Y. M. C. A. has struck the right plan, and in his paper he told how he had, with the Y. M. C. A. as a center, founded boys' clubs over the city. Every Association could do this and should do it. They could form a boys' club in different locations and give the boys the use of the gymnasium and baths, on condition that they attend the club regularly. Young men can be found in every Y. M. C. A. who would give one evening a week to the boys in some club room, or better still, in their own home. The Y. M. C. A. should not be turned into a boys' club house. It is not adapted for that



purpose and boys and young men will not mix. But in dealing with young men alone, the Association is dealing with the small end of a big proposition. The small end, because it is impossible to bring back the great mass of young men, who because of neglect in boyhood have drifted away. Save the boys and the Y. M. C. A. will save itself. This Mr. Page is doing in Haverhill.

#### BOYS' CLUBS AND THE HOME.

The conference stood for the boy in the Home. We all agree that unless we reach the home, we have not struck a solid foundation for our work. It was this idea of reaching the home that created a lively discussion between the supporters of the mass and group clubs. It was urged by the group club leaders that the leader of the mass club could not know so many boys, and that it destroyed the home to invite a boy every night into a club. On the other hand, the mass club leaders said, very good, but we cannot get the leaders for small clubs, and besides many of our boys are on the street every night if they are not in the club. Both plans have advantages and disadvantages. But, while a believer in the small group plan, I am not ready to condemn the mass clubs. If it were possible to reconstruct the home of the typical street boy, and make it a place of interest and sympathy, we would abolish the mass club. We do, however, firmly believe in the club as a supplement to the home.

#### THE BUNKER HILL BOYS' CLUB.

Club workers will be interested to hear something of the "Bunker Hill Boys' Club," whose guests we were while in Boston. The building is an old three story frame house. Mr. Mason organized the club and was its superintendent until recently, when Mr. E. L. Hunt succeeded him. The fall work is just beginning, and already over 300 boys are enrolled in the membership. On the first floor is the superintendent's office, and a reading room well supplied with papers and magazines. On the second floor are the game and manual training rooms, while on the third floor is the gymnasium. The club has also a printing outfit and the boys do all the club printing. The old house is always full of boys, and as Mr. Mason said, it shows how much can be done even with a meager equipment. The boys are proud of the old house and doubtless it is a place where many a young lad is saved.

A pleasant feature of the conference was the banquet tendered the club leaders by Dr. Forbush, Mr. Mason, and the "Bunker Hill Boys' Club," in the latter's club house. This enabled us to become acquainted and to exchange ideas at close range.

#### A JERSEY CITY BOYS' CLUB.

A very interesting boys' club is conducted by the Whittier House, in Jersey City. The leader, a young lawyer, found that his boys—about sixteen years of age—did not remain at home in the evening, but that they were spending their leisure time around the billiard tables in the saloons. He called the boys together for a conference and as the result a basement room was fitted up with a billiard table, several small games, and a punching bag. Here the boys are allowed perfect freedom, and are free from any harmful influences. This is a living demonstration of the fact that men, as a rule, do not seek the saloon except as it supplies their needs. Give the boys and young men the good things freely offered them by the saloon and you will surely strip the saloon of its power. This club room is full of young men every night. The leader proposes to form as an adjunct to the club a literary class and a musical band.

#### BOYS' CLUBS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOL.

One of the most interesting and progressive features of boys' work in New York City, is the fact that the public schools are being opened for evening classes and clubs. In a visit to the Ghetto, in the densely populated Jewish quarter of New York, we found that the upper floors were being used for night classes composed chiefly of young working men and women. On the ground floor in the large play-room,—for New York cannot afford a play ground except it places a "sky-scraper" over it,—a boys' club was in progress, numbering about one hundred boys, all playing good, wholesome games. In other rooms the group plan was being carried out. One group of particular interest was conducted by a resident of the University Settlement. These boys, averaging fourteen years of age, were doing good literary work in debating, and writing essays and verse. In another part of the school building a free gymnasium was in progress, well equipped, and the classes were led by a Yale man. In the basement were free shower baths. The public schools belong to the people and should be used for any social service not in conflict with their special educational work.

#### Chicago's Awakening to her Boy Problem.

The awakening of Chicago to the consciousness of herself is nowhere more happily manifest than in the intelligent interest and effort being bestowed upon the educational, social and reformatory treatment of her boy problem. Until within five or six years the distinctive interests of boys were strangely ignored, not only by the pub-

lie officials and institutions to whose custody multitudes of juvenile delinquents were committed, but also by private philanthropy and public spirited individuals, as well as by the boys own parents. The city police stations and House of Correction, to which thousands of these little fellows were confined, were nothing less than hotbeds of crime in the fertile soil of which their lives were literally seeded down. The dawn of the new day came two years ago, with the enactment of the Juvenile Court Law, through the strenuous labor and influence of a very few intelligent and determined people, chiefly two or three motherly women. The appointment of the eminently well qualified judge and the selection of his efficient corps of probation officers made the enactment immediately effective. Still some of the old abuses lingered, though constantly mitigated. At last the passionate appeal of Judge Tuthill for a rural detention home for juvenile delinquents, where the boys can be completely removed from the present contaminating influence of the city prison within whose outer walls they are still confined, has met with popular response and a subscription is well started toward providing the city with this much needed addition to its reformatory equipment.

It is a good sign that even with their better organization and agencies, these public officials are feeling their comparative helplessness without the co-operation of the parents and friends of the boys. The encouragement with which they met in trying to arouse the conscience and pride of the Italian population to co-operate with the efforts of the Court in behalf of their own children, will be read with interest in the following report of a conference held for this purpose.

#### A PLEA FOR THE ITALIAN CHILDREN.

"In the interest of the poor and neglected Italian children of our city," Judge Tuthill of the Juvenile Court issued a call for a meeting at Hull House, Sunday afternoon, Nov. 10th. The meeting was well attended and besides representatives of the Court, the Aid Societies and Settlements, the Italian people themselves were well represented, and in the audience were several of our foremost American citizens. Judge Tuthill presided over the meeting. He gave his reasons for calling the meeting by briefly setting forth the condition of the Italian people. He said the Italian comes to Chicago, unable to speak our language and unskilled in labor. As a result he must take the poorest positions. He finds that, with a large family, he cannot support it on \$1.25 a day, but he learns that his little boy or girl can earn good wages by selling papers or gum on the streets. The child goes to work,

sometimes when he is not over three years old. He is on the street all day and far into the night. In a short time he does not go home at night, but lives on the streets and in the alleys. Soon he is caught up by the police and brought to the Court. Many more children are sent to beg on the streets. This is a good business, for the bright-eyed Italian child is loved by all, and he brings home many nickels and pennies. If these conditions go unchecked, inevitably the child becomes a criminal. The homes must be reached. We must explain the conditions to the parents. They are so absorbed in the struggle for life that they do not give enough thought to their children. We must have Italian probation officers to look up the parents of the needy children and point out their dangers. The number of the Italian children that come into the Juvenile Court is out of proportion to other nationalities. The Court wants not to punish, but to help.

The chief probation officer said that one dollar a month from all the Italian organizations of the city would pay for the services of the three probation officers needed. The superintendent of the Bureau of Charities described an interesting investigation carried on by that Society. Twenty little street girls were followed home late at night, and the next day their parents were visited. A wealthy man offered to supply the money the child could earn, if necessary to keep her from the street, but not in one case was it necessary to call on him. The parents only needed to understand the conditions and the dangers.

The clerk of the Juvenile Court emphasized the plea of the other speakers for an understanding of the Italian people and their readiness to respond to an appeal to their pride.

An Italian physician said ignorance was the cause of the present condition. He advocated a license for newsboys and bootblacks and the appointment of an inspector who should see that no child received a license without a certificate from his teacher of attendance at school. Playing dice makes the boy bad. If these boys play dice, take away their licenses. "We must do the work ourselves," said another Italian, "an American cannot do business with an Italian ignorant of the American language."

Several Italian men volunteered their services as assistant probation officers. The meeting moved that he chairman appoint a committee of fifteen Italians to consider ways and means to meet the need.

The opening of the public schools as social centers for neighborhood work is another movement which will have a very direct bearing upon the solution of the boy problem.

### Savonarola's Boy Problem.

The misery that loves the company which suffers the same troubles and attempts the same solutions will find unexpected fellowship in Florence of Savonarola's day. In attempting the reformation of that fickle city, the great Friar found his civic ideals and patriotic purposes seriously withstood by the carnival festivities in which under the Medici the Florentines had indulged to an unlimited and almost incredible extent. The whole city is described to have been a scene of wild revelry, in the worst features of which the boys of Florence, of course, took special delight. Villari in his great story of the "Life and Times of Savonarola" vouches for the habits of their medieval gangs after this fashion: "They were accustomed, during those days, to continually stop people in the streets by barring the road with long poles, and refusing to remove them until they had extorted enough money to pay for their mad feastings by night. After these carousals, they made bonfires in the squares, round which they danced and sang, and finally pelted one another with stones in so brutal a fashion that no year passed without some of the combatants being left dead on the ground."

"THIS MAD AND BESTIAL GAME OF STONES."

As the chroniclers style it, was "so invertebrate and ancient a custom, that even the severe and terrifying edicts of the magistrates had never been able to repress, much less root it out." For "by nightfall the boys were so excited with the revels of the day that no penalty availed to keep them in check." Having achieved such brilliant results in the reformation of politics and morals, Savonarola at last attempted what he styled "the reform of the children." With his rare insight into human nature he foresaw how difficult it would be to entirely abolish the old customs. So he decided to transform them by substituting religious for carnival gaieties. "Accordingly at the same street corners where the children formerly assembled to demand money for their banquets, he caused small altars to be erected, before which they were to take their stand and beg contributions, not, however, for the purposes of self indulgence but for alms to the poor. Sing as much as ye will, he said to the boys, but sing hymns and sacred lauds instead of indecent songs." He not only wrote hymns for them himself, but commissioned a popular poet to compose other verses for their use. Obtaining the sanction of the city government, the boys of Florence undertook the transformation of its carnival. "On the last day of the festivities a grand procession was arranged, in which, attracted by the novelty of the thing, the whole population took part. The chil-

dren went through the city singing hymns and entering all the principal churches, after which they handed over the sums collected, with all their old importunity, for distribution among the modest poor." A little later this laudable processional was diverted to the far more questionable purpose of demanding the surrender of all indecent books, and pictures, carnival masks and costumes. For this purpose bands of boys were sent about the city, knocking at the doors of rich and poor, to demand all such "vanities or anathemae." Upon receiving them they repeated a special prayer of Savonarola's composition, and, passing on from house to house to the Piazza, they piled the confiscated articles upon old king carnival's monstrous funeral pyre, and sang devotional songs and invectives against the carnival while the flames ascended, the trumpets sounded, the bells pealed, and the multitude shouted. The good monk took a pardonable pride in the fact "that these children who used to go about begging in order to buy staves and burn brooms and feast and drink, now have collected more money for the poor, than thou with all thy wisdom wouldst ever be able to obtain;" and that "the evil custom of throwing stones, which neither the power of the magistrates nor prohibitions and penalties ever succeeded in putting out, a poor friar by a few words and prayers hath put an end to." Thus the chronicler attests "in the year 1496 the game of stones was suppressed for the first time, there was no more gluttonous feasting and three hundred ducats were collected for the poor." Nevertheless "some objections were raised by those who always murmured against every good work that proceeded from Savonarola, but the greater part of the citizens and all worthy men declared that the Friar had again achieved a task in which everyone else in Florence had failed."

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Superintendent Torrance of the Illinois State Reformatory at Pontiac, before the National Prison Congress last summer declared:

"I have no hesitation in asserting that at least 85 per cent of all young men and boys who have committed crimes, if taken charge of in time and subjected to proper treatment, will become good citizens. Ninety per cent of the young convicted of crimes would not become criminals with proper surroundings, proper companions and proper attention.

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"If I were king of the world I should have an examination of teachers as to their ability to tell a good story."

## West Side Neighborhood House and Armitage Chapel New York City.

BY ARCHIBALD A. HILL, HEAD-WORKER.

For some years the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church has conducted for the West Side a work known as Armitage House. Sunday-schools, religious services, a day nursery, kindergarten and a few clubs of a social nature were held in the building. From the earliest days it was felt that the work must not be conducted solely as a mis-

The services of a settlement worker were secured and for nearly three years he maintained his home in a tenement on the corner of Fifth Street and Tenth Avenue. The result of his investigations and work was from time to time reported to the church. The following plan of action was then adopted: To have one committee in charge of its work on the West side, but to have this work consist of two departments, namely, the West Side Neighborhood House, a social Settlement, and Armitage Chapel. The Settlement is not to be used as a bait to lure



New West Side Neighborhood House.

sion. The formally religious work was called a branch of the parent church. And more than that it was soon found that the religious services were not all that residents of the neighborhood needed. Gradually a desire for a larger expression of religious motives grew in the minds of the directors, and this desire caused the creation of a committee to examine into the needs of the neighborhood and to find the best methods of meeting them. This committee unanimously reported that a settlement would serve the neighborhood best.

any one to the chapel. It exists to do that which in itself is worth the doing and hence has no motive back of the deed. The form of organization in the chapel will be left to the future, but it is hoped that some sort of democratic bond will grow out of the work and be suggested by those who attend.

### HOUSE-WARMING BY NEIGHBORS.

To house these two departments of its work, the church has erected two buildings, entirely separate. On Friday evening, October 25th, the Settlement opened its doors to its neighbors. The

residents had prepared to receive about six hundred of their friends, but were overwhelmed by more than fifteen hundred. It was an especial delight to see that very many of the workmen on the building came with their families, and to see the pride they took in the solidity and worth of their own work. Often one or another was

lief in the wholesomeness of man's life, and as a concrete attempt to express the brotherhood of man. Dr. Johnston showed how all our work is but the flowering of work done in the past by this particular church and that it was the bringing together under one management of all the interests and aspirations of the church.



The Kindergarten in Full Operation.

heard to say, "Look at that, you can't beat work like that!" They had been well and justly treated and they in turn had rendered good and faithful work. As far as possible the neighbors were given preference in filling positions.

#### ADDRESSES AT THE FORMAL OPENING.

On October 29th was held the formal opening of the building to the general public outside of the neighborhood. Dr. W. H. P. Faunce, the former pastor of the Fifth Avenue Baptist Church, in whose term of service the work was begun, and Dr. R. P. Johnston, the present pastor, made the addresses. Dr. Faunce spoke of this Settlement as representing faith in God and belief that all life is religious, faith in man and be-

#### HOME FEATURES AND PUBLIC USES IN COMBINATION.

The Settlement building is situated on the northwest corner of Tenth Avenue and Fiftieth Street and the chapel is two doors north on Tenth Avenue. Both buildings are of red Harvard brick, laid in Flemish bond, with greenish-black leaders, and are very harmonious in color. The design of the settlement building was drawn with a view to secure public rooms without making the building a bare, unattractive institution. The main floor is an illustration. The wide hospitable entrance opens into a square hall from which the steps and elevator lead to the floors above. On the left is the auditorium where con-



certs, lectures, receptions and general meetings will be held. The New York Board of Education uses this Hall for its lecture courses. On the right of the entrance hall is the office of the Head Worker, so arranged that every one who enters the building passes under his notice. Also on this side are the dining and sitting rooms of the residents and a neighborhood reception room, where friends of the house may meet one another and feel really at home. It is an attempt to supply a homelike feature to an unhomelike neighborhood. These rooms are fitted up as little like an institution as possible and this is true throughout the building.

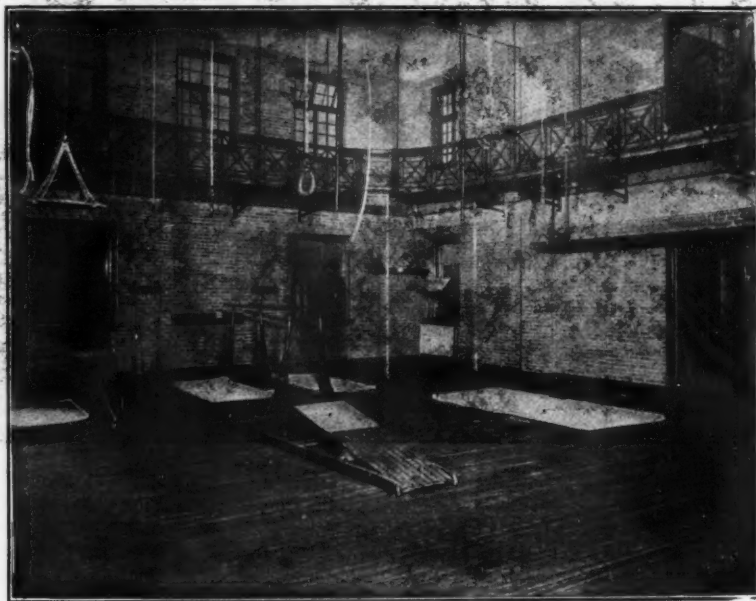
The basement contains the men's club rooms and bowling alleys, public baths, boiler and engine rooms, household kitchen, laundry and janitor's rooms.

For the men a separate entrance is provided in order that they may feel more at ease. There are fourteen shower baths and two tubs in the pub-

light and air on all four sides, a feature so far as known, not paralleled in New York. Over the stage of the auditorium and adjoining the kindergarten room is a small enclosed roof entirely for the use of the little ones. Here they can have flowers, sand-piles, and enjoy light and air unmolested. Within a few weeks there will be three large kindergartens in the house, one occupying the auditorium, one the regular kindergarten rooms, and one the club rooms on the third floor.

#### RESIDENTS' LIVING-ROOMS NEAR THE CLUB-ROOMS.

The third floor is the general floor. Carrying out the idea of keeping together the public and domestic sides of the work, the suites of rooms for residents and the public rooms for clubs and classes have been put on this floor. But this has not been done at the expense of the necessary privacy of the residents, as by an ingenious arrangement of entrance and closet space, each room is separated from the public hall by two walls and



Spacious Gymnasium and Running Track.

lic bath room. All of the power for the heating, lighting and machinery comes from the plant in the basement.

#### CHILDREN'S FLOOR.

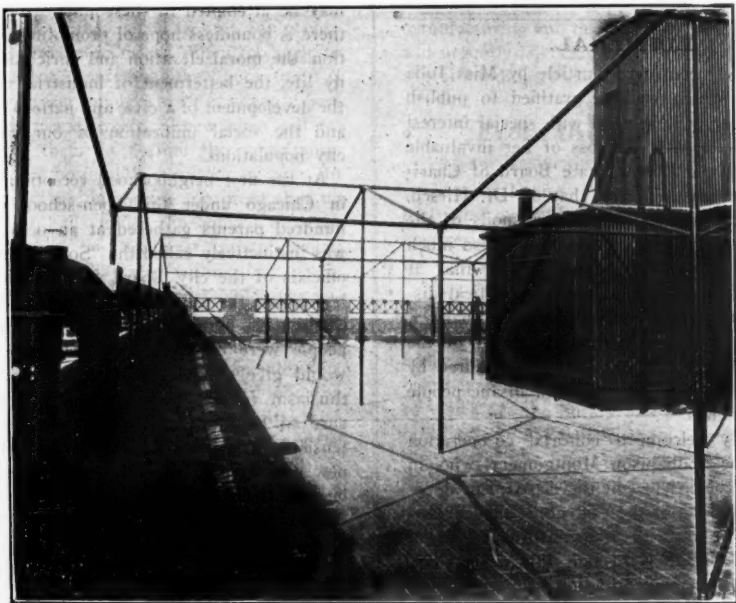
The second floor is given over entirely to the little children and contains club room, kindergarten, Day Nursery, crib and dining rooms. These rooms are large, bright and sunny and some have

an air space. These rooms are arranged so that they can be used either singly or en suite. The circulating library, club and class rooms are so arranged that they also can be used singly or thrown together for receptions and neighborhood parties. These rooms also are bright and sunny and varying in size in order to accommodate many kinds and sizes of clubs and classes.

The fourth floor is the one which contains the rooms specifically prepared for the work to be done in them. Here are the gymnasium, gymnasium bath, locker rooms, manual training rooms and cooking school. The gymnasium ceiling is twenty-four feet high and has light and air on all four sides, and also has an elevated running track. There is only one entrance to all the gymnasium

the kindergarten has used it on all the warm, clear days. The New York Board of Education promises to place two Vacation Schools on the roof in the coming summer.

The response of the neighborhood has been ready and cordial. The policy of the management has been simply to supply the demands that have been made known to them and thus the work done



rooms and thus the teacher knows exactly who is in them. The locker and bath rooms contain every thing wanted by the person who is exercising, thus there is no excuse for any one's being in the public halls in gymnasium clothes. The cooking school is supplied with individual stoves and with all modern essentials, but not with such things as would tend to discourage the pupil when she returns to the limited equipment of her own home.

The manual training room contains the usual equipment. The fifth and last floor contains rooms for five more residents and for the servants and a large room for quiet educational work. The latter is so situated that no one passes it save the residents who live on this floor.

#### ROOF GARDEN FOR SETTLEMENT AND VACATION SCHOOL USE.

The entire roof is a roof garden and will be covered with awnings in the summer. This fall

is genuinely meeting the needs of the neighbors. So far the largest demand has been for purely social clubs and classes that have practical bearing, such as cooking, dress-making and millinery. This is natural in a manufacturing neighborhood.

#### ARMITAGE CHAPEL FOR RELIGIOUS WORK.

The Armitage Chapel will have a seating capacity on the main floor of three hundred people and a gallery for a primary room which can be opened into the main auditorium, thus giving a total seating capacity of four hundred and fifty. There are two secretaries' rooms and a pastor's office and three private class rooms. In the rear of the chapel is a large open space, entered from the Settlement, which will be used as a playground.

Great is he who enjoys his earthenware as if it were plate, and not less great is the man to whom all his plate is no more than his earthenware.  
Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

# The Commons.

A Monthly Record Devoted to Aspects of Life and Labor from the Social Settlement Point of View.

GRAHAM TAYLOR, - - - - Editor.

Entered at Chicago Post Office as Second-Class Matter, and Published the first of every month from CHICAGO COMMONS, a Social Settlement at Grand Ave. & Morgan St., Chicago, Ill.

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## EDITORIAL.

The uniquely considerate article by Miss Julia C. Lathrop, which we are gratified to publish in this number, will be read with special interest by those who deplore the loss of her invaluable services from the Illinois State Board of Charities. Her resignation, with that of Dr. Hirsch, in protest against making partisan spoils of the secretaryship of the Board, has aroused so much criticism of the state administration that it bids fair to become a vital issue in political discussion. Already the Cook County Infirmary at Dunning is undergoing an investigation of the treatment too long and too patiently endured by the hundreds of helpless poor and insane people and their friends.

We heartily welcome to editorial co-operation Mrs. Caroline Williamson Montgomery, who, in this number, begins to edit the department devoted to the interests of the College Settlement Association. The capacity and constituency added to THE COMMONS through this department, cannot fail to increase the intrinsic value and helpful influence of this journal of the settlement movement.

### 5/6 Public School as a Social Center.

The opening of public school buildings as centers for neighborhood social service, in which New York has led the other great American cities, is full of inspiring possibilities. Without any suspicion of being patronized or in any way merely permitted, the people of all classes, races, faiths, and conditions, will more spontaneously respond to any offer which their Board of Education may extend to put the schools to social use, than they will take advantage of any privilege provided through private or philanthropic auspices. For a very real sense and pride of ownership in the schools is growing up among all the people. The common schools seem to the people to belong to all of them, as nothing else does or can. Even the streets and parks give them less of a sense of ownership, for they must rightfully "move on" in the highway, and

too few of them can linger long enough in their pleasure grounds to feel that the parks belong to them. But between the schools and almost every home the child is a living link. The school ground is the one patch of mother earth owned by the whole people. The school building is the one house which we all have the right to enter. Why should not all be made at home there, where, if anywhere, the American people have set up housekeeping together? Through what may be attempted in these public school-centers, there is boundless hope of promoting adult education, the moral elevation and enrichment of family life, the betterment of industrial relationship, the development of a civic and national patriotism, and the social unification of our cosmopolitan city populations.

At the first neighborhood reception to be held in Chicago under this open-school policy, five hundred parents gathered at an occasion, which was instinctively called the "Social Center." The officials of the city Board of Education were as hopeful of the advantage which would accrue to the schools by this use of the buildings as the people were of the help which these occasions would give to their neighborhood. A new enthusiasm for the public school system, will be sure to be awakened by its social service extension. The practical and public value of this new use to which the schools are being put, may be indicated by the first applications to be filed for their hitherto unused provision for the people's needs. The Norwegian National League asked for the auditorium of one school for a series of weekly lectures. A Woman's Club applied for the use of another school building for the purpose of instructing girls and women in sewing. Twelve teachers asked for the gymnasium of a high school one night each week that they might hold classes in manual and physical training. Members of an Improvement Association desired accommodations for their lecture course on municipal affairs. Twenty petitioners asked accommodations for social and literary occasions twice each week. The influential Merchants Club, composed of the more prominent young men in commercial and manufacturing circles, proposed to the Board of Education to take charge of the entire social use to which one of the largest high school buildings could be put this winter.

These are only the first fruits of the more liberal view taken of the social trust, committed by the people to their Boards of Education, in the custody of these great neighborhood houses, which our school buildings are thus recognized to be. Care should be taken to safeguard their

social use from any abuse which might provoke a reaction against this most hopeful movement. Perhaps the appointment of an assistant superintendent in each city or town, to have supervision of the social extension department of the public school, may conserve both the safety and the development of this new and sensible policy.

#### Why not Open School Building to Labor Unions?

One of the greatest drawbacks to the legitimate trades union movement is the lack of any proper place for the unions to meet. When too poor to rent quarters for themselves, the liquor trade is always enterprising enough to offer them a beer hall for their headquarters. Even when self-respect prompts them to decline this hospitality, which however hospitable is never without an eye to business, the unions are too often shut up to a choice of halls under the control of some saloon or brewery by the lower rate of rental, which puts only such places within their reach. The demoralizing influences under which the unions are thus forced to exist are not more obvious to outsiders than they are deplored by all the better men within their own membership. A railway employee in one of our Free Floor discussions stated the situation of his craft, with fine balance between the righteous indignation and the sense of personal honor, which it involved. He said his group were obliged to accept the hospitality of the saloon so often that he and other fellow workmen felt more and more ashamed to pass the bar with so little patronage in going out from their meeting. So that many a time he and other men, who were not in the habit of drinking, felt in honor bound to pay for drinks in discharge of their social obligation.

Even when not so intimately connected with the liquor interests, the "labor halls" are so ill adapted, so unattractive and so depressing as to deteriorate the moral tone and ideal of any individual or body of men frequenting them. Such rough, crude, uncleanly, material surroundings cannot fail to lower the ideal of the proceedings and take off the fine edge of a chivalrous public spirit, which struggle to exist against such odds. It is not Utopian but simply in accord with human experience to hope that a new sense of public responsibility for utterance and for action would gradually follow the public recognition and status which would be given the trade unions by granting them school halls for their regular weekly meeting. If in addition to this privilege the unions could have the use of a smaller room for club purposes every evening, they would be fairly emancipated from many of the demoral-

izing influences, which not only inevitably deteriorate the manhood of their membership, but complicate seriously their own and public interests in every crisis of industrial relationships. By this human service, as well as by popular, lecture courses on industrial history and the ethics of industry, the public schools may promote the public peace and progress, more practically and effectively than any other agency. It is most encouraging to the hope of better relationships in industry, that many large employers of labor, both in manufacturing and mercantile business, are openly and urgently advocating the opening of the public school buildings to labor unions.

#### From the Settlements.

##### NEW RESIDENCE AT KINGSLEY HOUSE.

Kingsley House, Pittsburg, Pa., is to be congratulated upon the opening, Nov. 11th, of their new residence. It is thus described by the Kingsley House Record:

"Just back of Union Station rises a high bluff upon which, at the corner of Bedford and Fulton Streets, stands a spacious mansion, surrounded by nearly an acre of ground. The front door opens into a wide and beautiful hall, on one side of which are the library and parlor, faced on the other side of the hall by the assembly-rooms. At the rear of the house are the billiard room, the dining-room, kitchen and pantries; the kindergarten rooms, Doctor's offices, gymnasium, room for mechanical drawing, and laundry, are in the basement. On the second floor are the residents' quarters and the Men's club room, which communicates with the gymnasium by a private stair. Part of the third floor has been equipped for the reception of men residents.

The expense of all repairs and necessary alterations was borne solely by Mr. Frick who has thus placed Pittsburg high in the list of cities possessing well equipped settlements."

##### EAST SIDE HOUSE SETTLEMENT.

76th. STREET AND EAST RIVER, NEW YORK CITY.

Ground has been broken for the erection of an additional building at the East Side House, 70x40 feet, three stories high to cost \$60,000. When the settlement was established in 1894, the neighborhood was reported to be "somewhat renowned for lawlessness. Its people were hostile to the settlement attempt and occupied our premises simply to get what they could without part in or understanding of any settlement idea. Now, not only is our community co-operative and friendly with the work of the East Side House, but there is alive and active a spirit of municipal reform.

Tammany is no longer supreme and unquestioned. Socially, the manners and ideals of the people with whom we live and move and have our being, have so improved that we are working now with orderly, courteous, self-respecting associates, helpful as intelligent partners, in almost all our endeavors. We have refused to take partisan action in city politics, for which we are criticised. The settlement as a settlement stands for no party, but we do labor as a settlement and as individuals for politics. So, too, there is no teaching of any one form or principle of religious practice, but the whole spirit and influence of our residents in the neighborhood is, we trust, for Christian righteousness. We fear and work against institutionalism and the success we aspire to is that it shall make East Side House a neighborhood home center."

ALTA SOCIAL SETTLEMENT, MAYFIELD ROAD  
CLEVELAND, OHIO.

From the head-worker of Alta House we have the following interesting information of the progress of its work:

"I am making an analysis of our Italian colony using the national statistical blank issued by the Charity Organization Society in New York, together with a map of the Italian district, hoping that with these statistics the city may be prevailed upon to back our efforts. We are fighting the garbage nuisance, truancy and child-labor, child insurance and poor lighting of the streets, which taken together with the Italian custom of "laying off" during the winter months breeds more crime than almost any other condition. We are almost never without contagious disease amongst us, due probably to the bad condition of the sewers and the over-crowding in the small houses, which fact makes our dispensary and trained nurse, necessities. The beer sold to children and carried into vacant lots, where they treat all round, is getting beyond endurance. Another fundamental evil in the colony is the spirit of indifference among the unskilled laborers to American customs and institutions and even the so-called necessities of life. They prefer discomfort, dirt and short rations that they may save money to "go home and buy a farm. They send all of their money to Italy, except enough to provide the bare necessities of life. They have sent drafts to Italy through one foreign exchange from our colony to the amount of \$48,260.62 in the last sixteen months. This fact speaks for itself. They make no better citizens in many ways than the Chinese."

## College Settlement Association.

### Standing Committee,

*President:* KATHARINE COMAN, Wellesley, Mass.  
*Vice-President:* MARY K. SIMKHOVITCH, (Mrs. Vladimir G. Simkhovitch.) 248 East 84th St., New York City.  
*Secretary:* MABEL GAIR CURTIS, 829 Boylston St., Boston.  
*Treasurer:* ELSIE CLEWS PARSONS, (Mrs. Herbert Parsons.) 112 East 35th Street, New York City.  
*Fifth Member:* HELEN ANNAN SCRIBNER, (Mrs. Arthur H. Scribner,) 10 West 43d Street, New York City.

EDITED BY CAROLINE WILLIAMSON MONTGOMERY.

It is peculiarly fitting that one of the first articles in this section devoted to the College Settlements Association, should come from the pen of Miss Coman, who has been interested in the work of the association from its inception, and who from her position as professor of Economics and Sociology, at Wellesley College, is especially able to have accurate and scholarly knowledge of social movements.

### THE RISE OF THE C. S. A.

By KATHERINE COMAN, PRESIDENT.

In the spring of 1886, Dr. Stanton Coit, then a young man and quite unknown, returned to this country from a sojourn in England during which he had seen much of Dr. Samuel A. Barnett and Samuel Hall. He was full of enthusiasm for the new method in philanthropy, and eager to introduce the settlement idea in America. He visited some of the eastern universities, but met with slight encouragement. The students were so much engrossed with their plans for professional or business success, that they seemed little likely to give themselves to social service, and Dr. Coit turned to the women's colleges. His visit to Wellesley is one of my vivid memories. It was a lovely June day, and we took him for a row on Lake Waban. The environment was a fitting one in which to plead for *noblesse oblige*. Dr. Coit urged that in America, women must take the lead in the settlement movement. His account of what university men were doing in East London, roused in us a great yearning to set about similar work in the neglected districts of our own cities, but the dream seemed far from realization.

### BEGINNING WORK.

In the following June, a group of Smith alumnae, brought together by a class reunion, talked of the new gospel of fellowship. They were Vida D. Scudder, Clara French, Helen Rand and Jean G. Fine. Two of these young women had just returned from a visit to Toynbee Hall and



brought with them a freshly kindled enthusiasm. Other college women, visiting England that year, had come under the influence of the same inspiration. Discussion, conference, and the quickening contact of mind with mind, soon bore fruit in deeds. Miss Fine went to live in lower New York, in the vicinity of Dr. Coit's Neighborhood Guild, purposing to give herself to work among the people. Her report of how much was needed and how much might be done if only there were help at hand, strengthened in us the desire to establish a Toynbee Hall in America.

#### RIVINGTON STREET OCCUPIED.

In the year following, the project of a college settlement was brought before the students of Vassar, Smith, and Wellesley. An appeal for funds with which to open a house in New York met with so encouraging a response that 95 Rivington street was secured, fitted up and opened as a woman's settlement in September, 1889. Miss Fine, whose experience and knowledge of the neighborhood gave her pre-eminent fitness for the position, was chosen head-worker. The fact that Hull House was opened that same month by two college women quite unknown to us of the eastern colleges is very suggestive. It is one of those coincidences that are not accidental but prophetic.

#### ORGANIZATION.

The necessity for establishing permanent relations with the college constituencies mainly to be relied upon for service and for funds, soon suggested the organizing of the College Settlement Association. Many people who loved the work protested against this step as involving too much of form and red-tape, but the plans were laid. In the hope of bringing "all college women within the scope of a common purpose and a common work," speakers were sent to the various educational centers, and settlement clubs or chapters organized. Every college where the membership fees amount to \$100 annually is represented by two members on the Electoral Board, one elected by the undergraduate constituency and one by the alumnae. The Board meets twice a year to receive the reports of the executive committee and head workers, to appoint the local committees responsible for the work of the several settlements, and to transact general business.

#### SUCCESS AND ITS COST.

In the twelve years of its existence, the work of the Association has never flagged for lack of funds or workers. Thirteen colleges are now affiliated in the Association; Wellesley, Radcliffe, Smith, Vassar, Barnard, Parker, Elmira, Wells, Cornell, Bryn Mawr, Swarthmore, Bucknell, and the Woman's College of Baltimore. The college

constituency is an ever changing one and must be renewed from year to year. This necessitates a constant propaganda. But the members of the under-graduate chapters are very apt to retain their connection with the Association after leaving college, and to carry the settlement gospel to their homes. So it comes about that the Association has a wider basis than can be secured by the settlement that must rely on its immediate locality for support.

#### C. S. A. SETTLEMENTS AND WORKERS.

Three college settlements have been founded in these twelve years, the original house in New York now under the direction of Elizabeth S. Williams, the Philadelphia Settlement at 431 Christian street opened in 1892, head-worker Anna Freeman Davies, and Denison House, 93 Tyler Street, Boston, opened in the same year with Helena S. Dudley in charge. Three hundred women have been in residence at one or another of the three settlements for longer or shorter periods. Few of the original settlers are now in residence, having been called to other fields of usefulness, but their settlement experience has borne fruit in deepening devotion to the service of mankind. A recent inquiry into the present occupations of past residents showed that 47 per cent were at present engaged in some form of philanthropic work. From the ranks of our settlement workers, twenty-three women have been appointed to the responsible post of head-workers, as in Pittsburg, Hartford, and other centers outside of our own organization.

#### REPORTS AND LITERATURE.

The annual reports of the Association contain, besides various business statements, an account of the year's work at each settlement, written by the head-worker in charge, and, not infrequently, contributions of a more general nature. Monographs have been issued by the Association from time to time, embodying results of sociological investigations carried on by settlement "fellows." The Association has, moreover, undertaken the compilation and printing of a Bibliography of Settlements. The rapid extension of the settlement movement necessitates frequent revision of the lists. Three editions have been issued. The last brought out in 1900 by the editor Mrs. Montgomery, gives reliable information concerning the one hundred settlements now at work in this country, together with all that could be ascertained in regard to the fifty or more established in Great Britain, France, Holland, Germany, India, Japan, and New South Wales. In this publication, the College Settlements Association aims to serve not its own membership merely, but the settlement constituency throughout the world.

### **The Fellowship of the College Settlement Association.**

BY EMILY G. BALCH, CHAIRMAN,

Last spring at its meeting in New York the College Settlements Association voted to establish a fellowship, of the value of four hundred dollars, for the current year. There was some discussion as to the work of the future fellow, whether the time should be spent in investigation and preparation of material for a sociological publication or in training for settlement or allied forms of practical work. The offer as finally made was open to candidates desiring the opportunity of a year's settlement residence for either purpose. The emphasis was laid on personality, and on the "promise of future usefulness." A college education was not made a requisite, but intellectual training and experience and especially a clear idea of the work desired and a definite purpose in doing it, were regarded as of great importance. Health too, as largely affecting power of work, was given decided weight.

No requirements were made beyond residence in a settlement during the academic year and "the pursuit of some clearly defined line of work, scientific or practical," under the general guidance of the committee and of the Headworker of the settlement.

The place of residence was not restricted to the houses maintained by the Association but was to depend on opportunities for the work to be undertaken. The time might, if it seemed best be divided between different houses. The offer was not limited to women.

The time for receiving applications expired July 15. Before that time twenty-seven applications, eight of them from men, were received, beside some too late to be considered. Some candidates were very obviously ineligible but it was encouraging to see how many young men and women in every way promising were eager to use such an opportunity as was offered. The painful part was to refuse all but one. The committee did, however, at last agree unanimously on Miss Mary B. Sayles of Montclair New Jersey. Miss Sayles' plan was to study tenement house conditions in Jersey City from Whittier House, where she then was, as a basis. Her work will be under the direction of the New York member of the committee Mrs. Herbert Parsons, (Mrs. Elsie Clews Parsons) of Columbia University.

Miss Sayles had done excellent work at Smith College of which she is a graduate, and was attending at the time of her application the Summer School of Philanthropy maintained by the Charity Organization Society in New York.

Miss Sayles subject is so timely and her field of work so strategic that it may be hoped that her years' work will be of considerable value. "Anyone that wants to work in Jersey City ought to be encouraged" said one friend and the remark if frivolous means that her work, and much more is needed.

#### **SUPPLY OF SPEAKERS FOR COLLEGE CHAPTERS.**

The committee to supply speakers to the various colleges, have taken upon themselves the new task of working up chapters in new colleges. Any college that would like any address may communicate with them. The Association has appropriated \$100.00 for the use of this committee. The committee are Miss Katharine Coman, Wellesley, Mass., Mrs. V. G. Simkovitch, 248 E. 34th St., New York City, Mrs. E. Kent Hubbard, Jr., Middletown, Conn., and Miss Pauline D. Goldmark, 270 W. 94th St., New York City.

#### **C. S. A. CHAPTERS IN BOSTON PRIVATE SCHOOLS.**

A conference was held in Boston Nov. 2nd, called by the Denison House committee of the C. S. A. on sub-chapters and for the purpose of conferring with teachers of private schools on the practicability of trying to form chapters. Heads of six schools were present and of these five expressed a desire to have a speaker sent to them to stir up the girls. In some of these schools it will not be advisable to start any organization, although the girls will probably give money and perhaps some entertainment to raise money. And in some cases they will go to help at play-hour at the settlement.

While some of the women seemed a little afraid that parents might object, others feel that the girls need to be made to realize that there are those who need more than their money.

#### **THE WELLESLEY CHAPTER.**

Sunday night, Oct. 20th, a meeting of the Wellesley Chapter of the C. S. A., was held in Houghton Memorial Chapel. Prof. W. Allan Wilson, a man of much experience in College Settlement work was the speaker.

The Wellesley Chapter of the C. S. A. held its elections in Wednesday, Oct. 23d. The result of the elections was as follows: Vice-presidents, faculty, Miss Balch; senior, Charlotte Faber; junior, Henrietta Page; sophomore, Sophia Brown; freshman, Blanche Wenner; secretary and treasurer, Mary D. Snyder; librarian, Mary Crombie; Advisory Board, Constance Draper and Annie B. McClure.

Miss Katharine Coman visited Smith, and Mt. Holyoke, the 16th and 18th of November, in the interests of the Association. At Mt. Holyoke Miss Jeanette Marks is teaching who was undergraduate elector at Wellesley for three years.

